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MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 1, 2015/2016

BKM2014 – KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT
(All Sections/Groups)

16 OCTOBER 2014
9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.
(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT

1. This question paper consists of 5 pages with 5 questions only.
2. Attempt **ALL** questions in Section A and **THREE** out of **FOUR** questions in Section B. The distribution of the marks for each question is given.
3. Please write all your answers in the Answer Booklet provided.

SECTION A (40 marks)

Bestro is a medium-sized accounting firm based in Melaka with branches in Johor Bahru, Segamat, Seremban and Klang. Bestro employs around 50 accountants and 30 support staff for its operations. Almost one half of its employees have been with the firm since its inception in 1995 and are very experienced in the work that they do. The CEO of Bestro graduated from Best University and has always given preference to accounting graduates from this university, resulting in almost all of its accountants being Best University graduates. In terms of human capital development, its staff are well-trained as they regularly go for training programmes and have excellent library facilities at all its branches.

Despite being one of the 'old-timers' in the accounting scene, Bestro is seen as being not innovative and too rigid if compared to its competitors. Some employees attribute this to the lack of vision among its top management and the absence of a shared organisational culture on how to work and to come up with new ideas. Furthermore, decision-making is concentrated at the higher levels of the firm with very little autonomy being given to the accountants. If there is anything that needs to be done, they need to refer to the established standard operating procedures or refer the matter to their superiors. There is very little opportunity to apply their expertise and experience in solving these issues.

Another common complaint among the more senior staff is that they have no opportunity to expand their job scope or learn doing something else as they are restricted to working within the boundaries of their limited job scope with no job rotation or job sharing. In addition to that, the firm does not have a well-developed IT infrastructure to share its knowledge. There is no repository or intranet to share all the manuals and documents, instead employees need to access the library or archive to get the materials that they require. Many employees also believe that more needs to be done by the firm to encourage the creation of new knowledge and to have mechanisms in place that will adequately reward those who share and create new knowledge.

QUESTION 1

(a) (i) Briefly describe what tacit and explicit knowledge are. (4 marks)

(ii) Identify and comment on any **ONE (1)** tacit knowledge and **ONE (1)** explicit knowledge example from the case. (4 marks)

(b) (i) List the major steps in the Wiig Knowledge Management Cycle. (4 marks)

(ii) Based on the case, identify and justify the **TWO (2)** steps in the Wiig Knowledge Management Cycle that would need to be improved. (4 marks)

(iii) Suggest the relevant actions that could be taken by the organization to address the issues identified for each step in (b) (ii). (4 marks)

Continued ...

(c) In addition to the SECI Model, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) proposed five enabling conditions for organisational knowledge creation. Briefly discuss how any **TWO (2)** of these enabling conditions for organisational knowledge creation could be applied by the organization in the case. (10 marks)

(d) According to Callahan (2004), there are three classes of incentives that could be used to encourage knowledge sharing behaviours among employees. Describe these **THREE (3)** classes of incentives and suggest which classes of incentives would be suitable for the case study organization. (10 marks)

(Total: 40 marks)

Continued ...

SECTION B (60 marks)

QUESTION 2

(a) A company has been advised by its consultants to implement the use of content management tools to enable it to allow its employees to work collaboratively and manage the work flow better. Briefly describe any **THREE (3)** benefits or advantages of using content management tools. (6 marks)

(b) Why are knowledge management metrics necessary in any knowledge management strategy? Explain with **TWO (2)** reasons. (4 marks)

(c) A company promotes its sales team members based on four conditions i.e. good performance reviews in the past 2 years, must have been in the current position for at least 3 years, sales volume of at least RM200,000 per annum and good customer feedback.

The criteria used to promote its sales team members are the following:

- All applicants must have good performance reviews in the past 2 years, must have been in the current position for at least 3 years, and sales volume of at least RM200,000 per annum to be promoted.
- Applicants who do not meet the sales volume of at least RM200,000 per annum criterion but have satisfied the other two criteria (good performance reviews in the past 2 years and must have been in the current position for at least 3 years) must have good customer feedback to be promoted.

Develop a decision table based on the criteria provided.

(10 marks)

(Total: 20 marks)

Continued ...

QUESTION 3

(a) The Intelligent Complex Adaptive System (ICAS) model is made-up of living subsystems that combine, interact and co-evolve to provide the capabilities of an advanced, intelligent technological and sociological adaptive enterprise that embraces the knowledge management concept. Among the key concepts in this model are flow, multidimensionality and permeable boundaries. Briefly describe the importance of these **THREE (3)** concepts. (6 marks)

(b) It has been proposed that knowledge management professionals need to subscribe and adhere to some professional code of ethics. Do you think that this is necessary? Justify with any **TWO (2)** reasons. (6 marks)

(c) Describe any **FOUR (4)** cultural barriers to knowledge management and suggest a suitable solution for each of the four cultural barriers. (8 marks)

(Total: 20 marks)

QUESTION 4

(a) When cultivating communities of practice, Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) explained that there is a need to welcome and allow for different levels of participation among members. Briefly discuss the different levels of participation that was proposed by Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002). (6 marks)

(b) Three conditions (age, academic performance and academic reference) are evaluated when processing scholarship applications. In order to get the scholarship to be approved, the following criteria must be met:

- Applicants aged below 40 years, with good or average academic performance and positive academic reference will be approved
- Applicants aged 40 years and above will be rejected.
- Applicants with poor academic performance will be rejected.
- Applicants with negative academic reference will be rejected.

Develop a decision tree based on these criteria. (14 marks)

(Total: 20 marks)

Continued ...

QUESTION 5

(a) Briefly explain what knowledge management systems are and describe any **THREE (3)** characteristics of these systems. (8 marks)

(b) (i) How do intelligent filtering tools assist users in knowledge-related tasks? (2 marks)

(ii) Describe any **TWO (2)** types of intelligent 'agents' that may be used to assist users in knowledge-related tasks. (4 marks)

(c) Explain any **THREE (3)** possible knowledge management audit outcomes or results that will benefit the organisation. (6 marks)

(Total: 20 marks)